might want her to be a saleswoman in a shop. But he did not look like a shop-keeper. She could not imagine what else it could be, unless of course it was something connected with buildings like the Cathedral.

Perhaps he thought she could be a guide. The idea sprang to her mind. Then she was quite sure she was too young and, if she was honest, too pretty to be a guide for men who would undoubtedly pay her too many compliments. "It was a waste of time my coming here," she told herself.

At that moment the door opened and Signor Vecchio came back. He was looking rather serious, and it struck her that perhaps Father Sebastian had done something to annoy him. At the same time it could, of course, be for some other reason.

Signor Vecchio sat down at his desk. "I apologise most profusely," he said, "for the interruption, but now I can put in front of you a very important and interesting proposition to which I hope you will agree."

Chapter Two